

PROSECUTOR



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Specialization provides the skills to prosecute sophisticated crimes

By RICHARD M. ROMLEY
Maricopa County Attorney



IN ORDER TO SUCCESSFULLY COMBAT modern crime, we must utilize sophisticated scientific and investigative techniques. The days when detectives relied on their wits alone and prosecutors concentrated on perfecting their oratorical skills to secure convictions are long gone. To ensure that justice is served, prosecutors must have expertise in a wide range of specialized

investigative, scientific and technological disciplines. Towards that end, the MCAO Major Crimes Division is primarily made up of prosecutors who are experts in handling very complex cases submitted to this office. The division has seven specializations.

The **Homicide Bureau** is staffed by senior prosecutors experts in areas ranging from the technicalities of DNA evidence to effective prosecution against insanity defenses. The attorneys are regularly in trial up to 100 days each year.

The **Special Crimes Bureau** prosecutes complex white collar crime, public corruption and arson cases. This bureau has been recognized for their aggressive approach to combating white collar crime. Prosecutors in our **Sex Crimes and**

Gang / Repeat Offender Bureaus routinely prosecute the most dangerous criminals. These highly effective attorneys use knowledge of the offenders motives, background, propensity for violence and physiological profile to obtain convictions. The MCAO Sex Crimes Bureau has

To ensure that justice is served, prosecutors must have expertise in a wide range of specialized investigative, scientific and technological disciplines.

been nationally recognized and members of the bureau speak at conferences throughout the country. Recently, the Gang/ROP Bureau developed and implemented a criteria for identifying the most dangerous gang members as well as a protocol for targeting repeat offenders. The **Major Drug and Vehicular Crime Bureaus** must contend with changing laws and newly discovered protocols relating to scientific analysis, making specialization an absolute necessity. The members of these bureaus are actively involved in educating community groups and working with police agencies to curb these types of crimes.

The **Family Violence Bureau** was implemented in response to the increasing violence within the family. Family violence is the second leading cause of homicide and is a threat not only to individual family units but to our community as a whole. I created the bureau because I thought that having a team of prosecutors that understands the dynamics of family violence was necessary and have the experience and strength to work with victims who often insist criminal charges be dismissed.

There is no doubt that the creation of these specialized bureaus within the Major Crimes Division has enhanced the ability of our office to stand toe-to-toe with well-financed defense attorneys who



Investigators John Langdon, Division Chief Ray Howard and Bill Heath safely display the new .40 Glock handguns.

No Longer a Dream... MCAO upgrades duty weapon

By NICOLE MANGER, Public Information Coordinator

THE INVESTIGATIONS BUREAU is now on the same page with urban area law enforcement, after upgrading their duty weapon to the .40-caliber Glock handgun in December, Division Chief Ray Howard said.

The .40-caliber is a more effective weapon. Law enforcement was recording more and more scenarios where the threat remained a threat after being hit numerous times by the 9 mm, Howard said.

Bureau Chief Bill Heath said he felt insecure knowing the 9 mm Glock handgun was not as powerful as the weapons wielded by criminals. Officers can now choose between carrying the standard issue .40-caliber or purchasing their own .45-caliber Glock handgun. Both Heath and Howard opted to personally purchase the .45-caliber Glock handgun.

The new .40-caliber Glock uses a larger, heavier bullet than the 9 mm Glock handgun, formerly used by the investigations team. Although more effective, the thumbtip-size bullets limit the amount of ammunition officers can carry. Few changes exist between the 9 mm and the .40-caliber, since Glock manufactures both guns.

The advantage, according to Investigator Bill Heath, was the cost.

It didn't cost the county a penny, Heath said. Glock exchanged our old 9 mm and unused magazine clips for the brand new Glocks and the same number of magazines at no cost to the county.

Size is another advantage of the .40-caliber. Despite the larger bullet, the guns are the same size as the old models, fitting perfectly in the investigators customized leather holsters. Leather holsters can cost about \$100, an expense eliminated by the switch.

The main benefit of the more powerful weapon is all area law enforcement will have the same handgun. The interchangeability allows an investigator to render help to a uniform police officer in need of ammunition or vice-versa, said Howard.

Investigators are certified peace officers, if a crime is committed or a police officer needs help they have an obligation to help.

The Phoenix Police Department services the investigators weapons and will continue to do so now that the switch is complete.

The switch took two days, including the training requirements designed to familiarize the investigators with the new handgun. The increase of firepower did not negate the need for training.

You still must be alert and aware of your surroundings. There are people out there that want to hurt you, said Investigator John Langdon. Always be in the yellow zone.

Investigators spent four hours in the classroom focusing on safety and mental preparation, before heading to the range for target practice. Langdon, who instructs at the Regional Police Academy with their recruit firearms training program, prepared the investigation team to meet annual AzPOST requirements with the new weapon. AzPOST, a law enforcement-wide

The Truth About Hate Crimes

In Arizona there is no such thing as a hate crime. There are, however, crimes that are motivated by hate. Those crimes are the crimes that the media and the public commonly and erroneously refer to as hate crimes. What is commonly referred to as a hate crime differs in one important aspect from regular crimes. A hate crime is meant to assault not only the attacked individual but it is also meant to intimidate the group to which the individual belongs; whereas most crime only affects the person who is injured and is not meant to affect any larger group.

Hate crime is best understood through example. Armando was a mild mannered Hispanic man whose only thoughts were to work at his fast-food job and save money, to send back to his family in Mexico. He had not been in trouble and he would never think of causing trouble. He usually kept to himself because his English was very poor. In the early morning hours of June 1995, Armando was walking home from work with a female friend. He was totally unaware that his life was about to change forever and almost end merely because he did not speak English well.

While Armando was working, a group of Nazi skinheads was busy getting drunk. After getting their courage out of a bottle, the skinheads decided to go and do a booting. (A booting is where you attack a person like a group of wolves and kick the person with steel-toed boots until they are dead or seriously injured.) The skinheads all piled into a car and drove around hunting for a person to hurt. They were looking for anyone who could not speak English. They were influenced by the skinhead song Speak English or Die. The result would be to hurt the individual they found and to scare the Hispanic Community with this assault.

There was very little traffic that early in the morning and no one was out except Armando, his female friend and a group of drunken thugs. Once they spotted Armando, they cornered him and asked if he spoke English. Armando did not understand and was immediately punched in the face. He and his female friend ran for their lives in different directions. The pack hunted down Armando.

Armando fled to a car lot and hid under a car. Four Skinheads dragged him out and began to kick him in the head, stomach, and in the legs. Then one of the skinheads pulled a knife and stabbed and slashed Armando eight times. They then fled and left him to die. Armando was stabbed in the eye, stomach, backside, and slashed on the arm. He managed to survive this vicious and unprovoked attack.

In 1994 Richard M. Romley, the Maricopa County Attorney, created the Hate Crimes Unit to prosecute these types of cases. Since there is no such thing as a Hate Crimes Statute, the four skinheads were prosecuted for committing Aggravated Assault, a Class 3 felony, against Armando. The Hate Crimes Unit did the prosecution from 1995 to 1996. All four individuals received prison sentences ranging from five to ten years.



By JAMES BLAKE
Trial Bureau
Division Chief



L to R: Rick Romley, City Councilwoman Peggy Bilsten, Claudia Camacho, and Mayor Skip Rimsza.

RICK ROMLEY PRESENTED A CHECK for \$500 to the Claudia Camacho Scholarship Fund on behalf of the County Attorney and Sheriff s Association at a recent Phoenix City Council meeting. As a young teenager, Claudia was shot by a rival gang member. Since that time, she has committed her life to helping other youth to turn away from crime and violence. Claudia has been the youth representative to the Phoenix Violence Prevention Initiative and the Phoenix Youth Education Committee.

Free Speech

Juvenile attorney lectures on crime and consequences

By NICOLE MANGER
Public Information Coordinator

The thought of standing up in front of high school students explaining the intricacies of law can drive the most well-versed attorneys into a panic attack.

The anxiety of public speaking is nothing new to Juvenile Attorney Delia Neal, who competitively spoke on both her high school and college speech and debate teams. Yet, this self-proclaimed motivational speaker speaks at two to three valley schools a month on the legal repercussions of substance abuse, general law and careers in law.

So how does she inspire a room full of unenthusiastic teenagers?

Credibility. They all know kids who do a number of drugs. I lose all credibility if I tell them that drugs will kill them, Neal said. I do tell them Maybe you wont die the first time but your use of the drug will increase to reach a high. If you didnt die of coke the first time you will be addicted think about that.

She completes her tale with a gruesome anecdote borrowed from a fellow juvenile attorney, Paula Davidon. According to

Davidon, the acid compounds mixed with pure methamphetamine eventually deteriorate the users skin and hair. Neal shares with her audience the symptoms of long term meth use like open wounds and losing teeth.

Neal, who has a talent for extemporaneous speaking, said she allows the students to control the discussion instead of having a rigid outline.

I let them run the class and encourage them to ask questions, she said. Although, I do know the appropriate time to slip in facts and good stories.

The students commonly ask Neal about what happens in juvenile detention. A question she uses as a springboard into an explanation of the juvenile court process.

I explain the idea behind juvenile court is to rehabilitate the child before it is too late, she said.

As the students begin to feel comfortable, Neal said, the hypothetical questions start.

If I am in the car with someone who is drinking, can I get in trouble? When can I be searched? . . . are typical questions posed by the students. After three what ifs, Neal maintains credibility by focusing on

the consequences rather than inventing legal defenses to work around the law.

While many students consider themselves street-smart, most do not understand the juvenile system. They operate under the assumption that their juvenile records will be wiped out when they turn 18-years-old and that serious consequence wont happen to them.

Its not Big Brother, but on the other hand they need to be held accountable for their actions, Neal said. I tell them, You do not operate in a bubble. Dont think that adults arent watching.

The students are not the only ones who benefit from Neals speeches. After two years of charging juveniles with crimes, Neal admits that speaking to schools reaffirms her faith in teenagers.

Students are fascinated with juvenile law. They have a good time, Neal said.

When 15- and 16-year-olds begin opening up, it is very rewarding.

After speaking to a high school government class, Neal received thank you notes from each student asking her one question. She wrote each student back, either answering their questions or referring them to another source. Her most

Reach the Community Through Speakers Bureau and Writers Board

By ELIZABETH SUKENIC, Community Relations Director

THE MARICOPA COUNTY ATTORNEY S OFFICE is encouraging attorneys, law enforcement specialists and members of the staff to get involved in the Speakers Bureau and Writers Board. The Speakers Bureau was created in 1990 to provide information about the role of the County Attorney s Office in protecting the community. The Speakers Bureau needs individuals who can speak to schools, civic organizations and associations on a variety of criminal justice topics.

The Writers Board was recently created to provide newspapers and magazines with prepared articles on various topics related to criminal justice issues. These articles are a valuable source of information that will educate and promote community awareness. Authors would write on topics like adoption, sex crimes, single parent concerns, hate crimes and organized crime. The articles would be forwarded to a community newspaper or magazine after the appropriate review and approval.

Mark Your Calendars

Get a chance to meet your fellow employees in a day filled with fun, music, food and games.

- Where? Estrella Mountain Park, southwest Valley.
- Why? We re celebrating the first ever, Maricopa County-wide Employee Picnic.
- When? Saturday, March 27th.
- Who? All employees and their friends and family are invited to join the fun.
- How Much? Tickets cost \$2 per person, or \$5 per family. Parking and lunch included.

Contact your nearest NESRA Rep. Don t know your NESRA Rep? Call Nancy Santos, 506-5233.

Also, volunteers are needed to help out with one hour of their time to run children s games, assist with sporting activities or cook lunch. Anyone interested can call Anna Medina at 506-3416.

A story to tell...

Taking it for the team

By LILY GHOLAM
Legislative Intern

The ringing phone blends into the background as visitors crowd around the receptionist desk. Police officers waiting for interviews, individuals requesting information, and impatient witnesses asking to meet with attorneys are milling around the waiting area. The barrage of people does not eliminate the everyday task of logging motions and constantly answering the phone.

In the middle of all of the chaos calmly sits reception-



Receptionist Liz Sevilla has a ball answering the phone.
Left: Sevilla cheerfully signs in a visitor at the fifth floor receptionist desk.

ist Liz Sevilla, welcoming visitors to the 5th floor.

Liz says the hardest part about being a receptionist is determining a persons mood. Liz deals with countless faces on a daily basis. Observers say she is always friendly and very helpful staying true to her motto, you cant treat everyone the same.

You never know the kind of day someone is having, Liz says.

It is Lizs positive attitude that has allowed her to accomplish significant goals while working at the Maricopa County Attorneys Office.

Liz, a native Arizonian, was born and raised in Phoenix. She began work-



ing at the Maricopa County Attorneys Office in 1992 through the

Cooperative Office Education (COE) program, which allows teens to gain experience in the work force while earning their high school diploma. This opportunity served as a stepping stone for Liz, who started as a runner. This is her fifth year as a receptionist.

Working at Maricopa County Attorneys Office has given her the confidence to fulfill many of her dreams. Recently, Liz graduated from the Phoenix Therapeutic Massage College by attending classes three hours a night Monday through Friday for nine months. She says she pursued this degree simply because she enjoys making people feel better. Also, she

wants to change the negative reputation of massage therapy. (She says the relaxation techniques she learned help her manage on-the-job stress, leading to a healthy and happy outlook.)

Liz says she loves working for the County Attorneys Office because interacting with the public is challenging. Working in major crimes

and investigations, she has learned to deal with many delicate situations. Liz says she maneuvers around uneasy situations by personalizing each encounter.

Although Liz is a seasoned receptionist, she has had her share of embarrassing moments, especially during the first months at the front. One incident that sticks in her mind was a phone call for Paul Ahler. She asked the caller his name Rick he answered. Like a good receptionist she asked Rick who. To her surprise, it was County Attorney Rick Romley. Later Rick came down and joked with her, assuming she was new. Nevertheless, Liz still turns bright red as she recalls this piece of nostalgia.

Her co-workers characterize her as soft spoken,

MCAO United Way Campaign Surpasses Goal

As I listened to the teenage girls at Florence Crittendon, a home and school for at-risk girls, speak about their new-found hope for the future, I realized the contribution of the United Way makes in improving the life of those it helps. Peeking into a tidy corner of a shared room and seeing the small campus school where they learn in a safe, friendly environment was an eye-opening experience. This experience convinced me that running a successful United Way campaign was a priority.

Several weeks before my visit to Crittendon, I met with Valerie Alspaugh of the Check Enforcement Bureau. Valerie coordinated the United Way campaign for many years. Her enthusiasm, assistance and moral support throughout the campaign has made my participation a mem-

orable experience.

On September 16, Tamara Martin of the County Council Division and I attended an all-day United Way training session with approximately 40 county department representatives. Even after we met with the loaned executive assigned to our office, and toured two United Way funded agencies, we still had many questions. The most obvious being, just how does one (or two) individuals ensure a successful United Way campaign?

Both Tamara and I volunteer at United Way funded agencies, so we had a limited frame of reference. Tamara and her mother are co-neighborhood Girl Scout directors, managing 14 troops and 340 girls. This job includes training, service projects and fund raising. Once a month I entertain children at a local homeless shelter with an art project, followed by a meal we serve them. This simple project raises everyone's spirits. Some parents even join in.

With this background in community service under our belt, we went to work. Martins belt was a bit uncomfortable as she was eight months pregnant during the campaign. I visited virtually all bureaus and divisions. I believe seeing the United Way video starring four of our own county employees who benefitted from several agencies and asking questions face to face, was the major factor in our success. If employees missed the presentation it was a lost opportunity to gain insight into one of the most efficient charities in the nation.

We had 29 employees increase their donations by at least 10 percent from the previous year. Of course, we had an onslaught of first-time donors. We look forward to next years campaign and even greater success. Surpassing our goal to double last years numbers, we raised a total of \$19,749 from 165 employees. The Maricopa County Attorneys Office received special recognition from David Smith, CEO, for this accomplishment.



Victims Rights Week April 25 - May 2, 1999

Sunday April 25 at 4 p.m. Victims Rights Rally at Wesley Bolin Plaza. The rally will feature motivational speakers and presentations by local law enforcement officials. Parents of Murdered Children will hold a vigil after the rally.

Thursday April, 29 at 1 p.m. Attorney Recognition Ceremony

The Victim Witness Division will recognize those attorneys who demonstrate exemplary behavior when assisting crime victims.

MCAO employees will be asked to wear purple ribbons throughout the week to commemorate victims of violent crimes in Arizona and the nation.

Your support is essential for a successful week.

PRO RE NATA (An Occasion Has Arisen)



IT S A GIRL: Baby Cassidy Moria Coates, 7 pounds and 8 ounces, was born to proud parents Derek and Darci Coates on Jan. 2, 1999 at 6:33 am. Mommy Coates is the

Coordinator for the Training and Development Division.

IN MEMORY OF: Donald Azbell, 59, an upholstery business owner, died Jan.17, 1999. Survivors include: his parents; his wife Mary Azbell, MCAO Travel Coordinator; children, Marianne, David Sr., Carolyn, Juanita, Andy, Tom, Jim and Joanna; 12 grandchildren; and 3 great-grandchildren. You may send contribu-

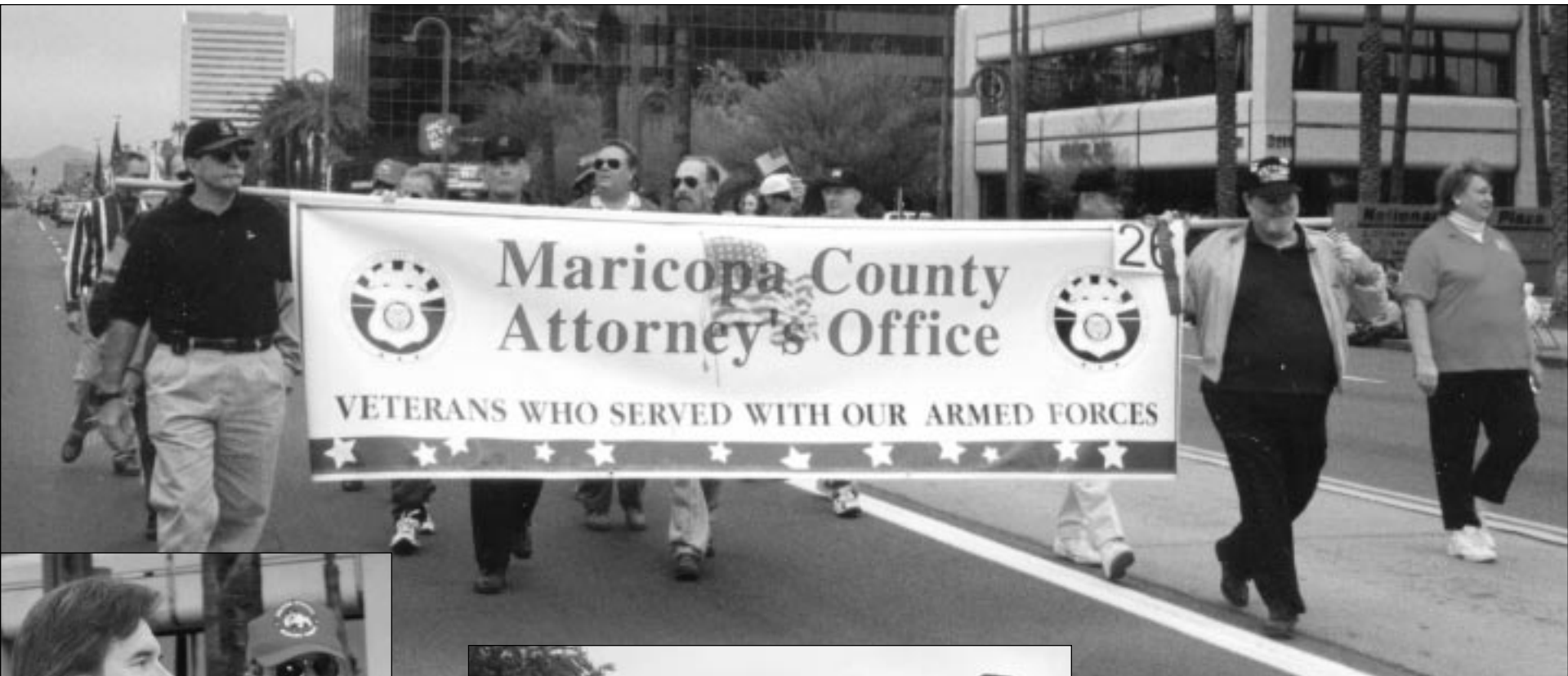
tions to: Fellowship of Christian Athletes P.O. Box 34466 Phoenix, AZ 85067-4466

If you note that the contribution is in the memory of Donald Azbell it will be directed to the Sports Youth Camps area, an important charity to Don.

ATTORNEY PROMOTIONS: Keith Manning transferred from the Major Crimes Division, Gang/ROP Bureau, to the Southeast Division Pretrial Bureau Chief Position.

Keith Vercauteren transferred from the Training and Development Division, Legal Staff Development Bureau, to the West Valley Prelim Bureau Chief position.

Former Eastside Juvenile Division Bureau Chief Sally Wells transferred to the Pretrial Division as the new Grand



Parades, People &



The winter season was kicked off by the November 11 Veterans Day Parade. County Attorney and Guest of Honor Rick Romley rode on a red Corvette behind MCAO's procession of 20 veterans. A huge thank you to all the veterans and volunteers whose many sacrifices included working on their holiday. Division holiday parties spread the festive spirit, featuring everything from Santa to ballet folk!



Photos by Nicole Manger and Diane Preiss



Photo by Barbara Marshall